

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

for the
Central District of CaliforniaIn the Matter of the Search of
A USPS Priority Mail parcel bearing tracking
number 9505 5128 5923 4256 3978 46

Case No. 8:24-mj-00449-DUTY

WARRANT BY TELEPHONE OR OTHER RELIABLE ELECTRONIC MEANS

To: Any authorized law enforcement officer

An application by a federal law enforcement officer or an attorney for the government requests the search of the following person or property located in the Central District of California (*identify the person or describe the property to be searched and give its location*):

See Attachment A

I find that the affidavit(s), or any recorded testimony, establish probable cause to search and seize the person or property described above, and that such search will reveal (*identify the person or describe the property to be seized*):

See Attachment B

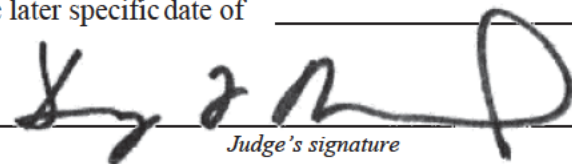
Such affidavit(s) or testimony are incorporated herein by reference and attached hereto.

YOU ARE COMMANDED to execute this warrant on or before 14 days from the date of its issuance (*not to exceed 14 days*)☒ in the daytime 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. ☐ at any time in the day or night because good cause has been established.


Unless delayed notice is authorized below, you must give a copy of the warrant and a receipt for the property taken to the person from whom, or from whose premises, the property was taken, or leave the copy and receipt at the place where the property was taken.

The officer executing this warrant, or an officer present during the execution of the warrant, must prepare an inventory as required by law and promptly return this warrant and inventory to the U.S. Magistrate Judge on duty at the time of the return through a filing with the Clerk's Office.

☐ Pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 3103a(b), I find that immediate notification may have an adverse result listed in 18 U.S.C. § 2705 (except for delay of trial), and authorize the officer executing this warrant to delay notice to the person who, or whose property, will be searched or seized (*check the appropriate box*)

☐ for ____ days (*not to exceed 30*) ☐ until, the facts justifying, the later specific date of _____.Date and time issued: September 23, 2024
Judge's signatureCity and state: Santa Ana, CaliforniaHon. Douglas M. McCormick, U.S. Magistrate Judge
Printed name and titleAUSA: Brian Yang (714) 338-3534

AO 93C (Rev. 8/18) Warrant by Telephone of Other Reliable Electronic Means (Page 2)

Return		
Case No.: 8:24-MJ-00449-DUTY	Date and time warrant executed: 09-24-2024 at 11:29 AM	Copy of warrant and inventory left with: USPS
Inventory made in the presence of : Postal Inspector J. Weidenkopf		
Inventory of the property taken and name of any person(s) seized: USPS #9505 5128 5923 4256 3978 46 - Approx. 5,517 gross grams of boxed chocolate bars containing shrooms		
Certification		
<p>I declare under penalty of perjury that this inventory is correct and was returned along with the original warrant to the designated judge.</p> <p>Date: <u>09-24-2024</u></p> <div style="text-align: right;"> _____ <i>Executing officer's signature</i> Sumyra Duy, Postal Inspector _____ <i>Printed name and title</i></div>		

AFFIDAVIT

I, Sumyra Duy, being duly sworn, declare and state as follows:

I. PURPOSE OF AFFIDAVIT

1. This affidavit is made in support of an application for a warrant to search the following United States Postal Service ("USPS") parcel in the custody of the United States Postal Inspection Service ("USPIS") in Santa Ana, California, within the Central District of California, as described more fully in Attachment A:

a. A USPS Priority Mail parcel bearing tracking number 9505 5128 5923 4256 3978 46 ("**SUBJECT PARCEL**");

2. The requested search warrant seeks authorization to seize evidence, fruits, and instrumentalities of violations of Title 21, United States Code, Sections 841(a)(1) (distribution and possession with intent to distribute a controlled substance); 846 (conspiracy to distribute or possess with intent to distribute a controlled substance); and 843(b) (unlawful use of a communication facility, including the mails, to facilitate the distribution of a controlled substance) (the "Subject Offenses"), as described more fully in Attachment B.

Attachments A and B are incorporated by reference herein.

3. The facts set forth in this affidavit are based upon my personal observations, my training and experience, and information obtained from various law enforcement personnel and witnesses. This affidavit is intended to show merely that there is sufficient probable cause for the requested warrant and does

not purport to set forth all of my knowledge of or investigation into this matter. Unless specifically indicated otherwise, all conversations and statements described in this affidavit are related in substance and in part only, and all dates and times are on or about those indicated.

II. TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE

4. I am a United States Postal Inspector ("USPI") with the United States Postal Inspection Service ("USPIS") and have been so employed since May 2012. I am currently assigned to the Contraband Interdiction and Investigation - South Team of the Los Angeles Division, which is responsible for investigating drug trafficking violations involving the United States Mail to distribute controlled substances and/or controlled substances proceeds.

5. I have completed a twelve-week basic law enforcement training course in Potomac, Maryland, which included training in the investigation of narcotics trafficking via the United States Mail. Additionally, I have attended a 40-hour Los Angeles Police Department Peace Officer Standards and Training Certified Academy Narcotics School. Prior to becoming a USPI, I worked as a financial investigator. I hold a Bachelor of Arts degree from California State University, Fullerton in Sociology and a Master's of Advanced Study from University of California, Irvine in Criminology, Law and Society. As part of my law enforcement duties, I have conducted numerous parcel investigations that have resulted in the arrest of individuals who have received and distributed controlled substances, as well as the seizure of the

controlled substances and/or the proceeds of the sales of controlled substances.

III. SUMMARY OF PROBABLE CAUSE

6. On or about September 13, 2024, at the Anaheim USPS Processing and Distribution Center in Orange County, California, I and other Law Enforcement Officers identified the **SUBJECT PARCEL** as meeting some of the following criteria common to packages containing contraband, including the package contained handwritten addresses, all the seams are taped, and according to law enforcement and USPS databases, the parcel contained sender and recipient names that were not associated with their respective listed addresses.

7. Additionally, on or about September 18, 2024, a trained drug detection dog alerted to the **SUBJECT PARCEL** for the presence of drugs or other items, such as the proceeds of drug sales that have been contaminated by drugs.

IV. STATEMENT OF PROBABLE CAUSE

A. Background on Use of Mails for Drug Trafficking

8. Based on my training and experience as a Postal Inspector, and the experiences related to me by other Postal Inspectors who specialize in drug investigations, I know the following:

a. Postal Inspectors have been conducting investigations of drug trafficking via USPS Express Mail and Priority Mail since the mid-1980s. In the early 1990s, Postal Inspectors in Los Angeles, California, began conducting organized interdictions of Priority Mail Express and Priority

Mail parcels suspected of containing controlled substances and proceeds from the sale of controlled substances. Postal Inspectors also regularly examined and investigated Priority Mail Express and Priority Mail parcels. During the 1990s, Postal Inspectors observed that the trend was for drug traffickers to send controlled substances and proceeds from the sale of controlled substances, in the form of cash, using boxes.

b. Although Postal Inspectors still see boxes used to send for controlled substances and cash, there has been a gradual change over the years toward the current trend of using smaller boxes, flat cardboard envelopes, and Tyvek envelopes, with proceeds from the sale of controlled substances converted to money orders. By using money orders, drug traffickers are able to send large dollar amounts in compact form, using much smaller conveyances, which lend a sense of legitimacy to the parcel's appearance.

c. Los Angeles is a significant source area for controlled substances. Controlled substances are frequently transported from the Los Angeles area via U.S. Mail, and the proceeds from the sale of controlled substances are frequently returned to the Los Angeles area via U.S. Mail. These proceeds are generally in the form of money orders, bank checks, or similar monetary instruments in an amount over \$1,000. Based on my training and experience, I know that proceeds from the sale of controlled substances often contain the odor of drugs because they have been contaminated by or associated with the odor of one or more drugs.

d. Drug distributors often use USPS Priority Mail Express, which is the USPS overnight/next day delivery mail product, or Priority Mail Service, which is the USPS two-to-three-day delivery mail product. Drug distributors use the Priority Mail Express delivery service because of its speed, reliability, and the ability to track the parcel's progress to delivery. Drug distributors use the Priority Mail delivery service because it provides them more time for travel between states if they decide to follow their shipments to their destination for distribution. Also, by adding delivery confirmation to a Priority Mail parcel, drug traffickers have the ability to track the parcel's progress to the intended delivery point, as if the parcel had been mailed using the Priority Mail 2-Day Service.

9. Based on my training and experience, and the collective experiences shared with me by fellow Postal Inspectors who specialize in investigations involving the mailing of controlled substances and proceeds from the sale of controlled substances, I know that the following indicia suggest that a parcel may contain drugs or drug trafficking proceeds:

- a. The parcel is contained in a Large Flat Rate cardboard box;
- b. The parcel bears a handwritten or typed label, whether USPS Express Mail or Priority Mail;
- c. The handwritten or typed label on the parcel does not contain a business account number;

d. The seams of the parcel are all taped or glued shut;

e. The parcel emits an odor of a cleaning agent or adhesive or spray foam that can be detected by a human; and

f. Multiple parcels are mailed by the same individual, on the same day, from different locations.

10. Parcels exhibiting such indicia may be subject to further investigation, which may include verification of the addressee and return addresses.

11. I know from my training and experience that drug traffickers often use fictitious or incomplete names and addresses in an effort to conceal their identities from law enforcement officers investigating these types of cases. To the extent that real addresses are ever used, it is only to lend a legitimate appearance to the parcel and is almost always paired with a false name.

B. Initial Investigation of the SUBJECT PARCELS

12. On or about September 13, 2024, during routine parcel inspections at the Anaheim USPS Processing and Distribution Center, I determined that the **SUBJECT PARCEL** met some of the initial suspicious characteristics as described above. Specifically, I determined the following:

a. **SUBJECT PARCEL** is a USPS Priority Mail parcel bearing tracking number 9505 5128 5923 4256 3978 46. **SUBJECT PARCEL** is white colored, USPS Priority Mail large flat rate cardboard box. **SUBJECT PARCEL** has addresses handwritten directly on the parcel with "Fragile" stickers placed on it.

According to USPS and CLEAR database records, the return address listed on **SUBJECT PARCEL** - "8190 13th St Apt 103, Westminster, CA 92683" - appears to be a legitimate address, and the sender's name listed, "Kevin Lee" does not associate to the address. The recipient address listed on **SUBJECT PARCEL** - "6501 Matson Dr., The Colony, TX 75056" - appears to be a legitimate address and the listed recipient name, "Peter Dickson" does not associate to the address.

C. Drug-Detection Dog Alerts to the SUBJECT PARCEL

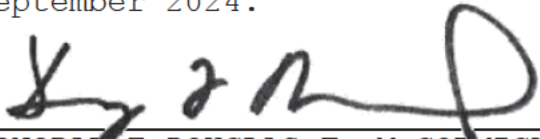
13. On or about September 18, 2024, based on the suspicious characteristics of the **SUBJECT PARCEL**, Santa Ana Police Department Detective Gabriel Gutierrez and his narcotics-detection canine, "Poppy", examined the exterior of the **SUBJECT PARCEL**. I learned from Det. Gutierrez that Poppy gave a positive alert to the **SUBJECT PARCEL**, indicating the presence of controlled substances or other items, such as the proceeds of controlled substances, which have been recently contaminated with the odor of controlled substances. Attached hereto as Exhibit 1, which I incorporate fully herein by reference, are documents setting forth information provided by Detective Gutierrez regarding Poppy's training and history in detecting controlled substances, and the examination of the **SUBJECT PARCEL**.

V. CONCLUSION

14. For the reasons above, there is probable cause to believe that the **SUBJECT PARCEL**, as described in Attachment A, contain evidence, fruits, and instrumentalities of violations of

Title 21, United States Code, Sections 841(a)(1) (distribution and possession with intent to distribute a controlled substance); 846 (conspiracy to distribute or possess with intent to distribute a controlled substance); and 843(b) (unlawful use of a communication facility, including the mails, to facilitate the distribution of a controlled substance), as described in Attachment B.

Attested to by the applicant in
accordance with the requirements
of Fed. R. Crim. P. 4.1 by
telephone on this 23rd day of
September 2024.



HONORABLE DOUGLAS F. McCORMICK
UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE

ATTACHMENT A

PARCEL TO BE SEARCHED

The following United States Postal Service ("USPS") parcel seized from the mail stream on September 13, 2024, is currently in the custody of the United States Postal Inspection Service in Santa Ana, California:

a. **SUBJECT PARCEL** is a USPS Priority Mail parcel bearing tracking number 9505 5128 5923 4256 3978 46. **SUBJECT PARCEL** is white colored, USPS Priority Mail large flat rate cardboard box. **SUBJECT PARCEL** is addressed to "Peter Dickson, 6501 Matson Dr., The Colony, TX 75056." The return address listed on **SUBJECT PARCEL** is "Kevin Lee, 8190 13th St Apt 103, Westminster, CA 92683." **SUBJECT PARCEL** was postmarked on September 12, 2024, in the 92685 zip code.

ATTACHMENT B

ITEMS TO BE SEIZED

The items to be seized are evidence, contraband, fruits, and instrumentalities of violations of Title 21, United States Code, Sections 841(a)(1) (distribution and possession with intent to distribute a controlled substance); 846 (conspiracy to distribute or possess with intent to distribute a controlled substance); and 843(b) (unlawful use of a communication facility, including the mails, to facilitate the distribution of a controlled substance) (the "**Subject Offenses**"), namely:

- a. Any controlled substances, including marijuana;
- b. Currency, money orders, bank checks, or similar monetary instruments in aggregate quantities over \$1,000; and
- c. Parcel wrappings, and any associated packaging material.

EXHIBIT 1

AFFIDAVIT

**HANDLER GABRIEL GUTIERREZ
AND K9 "POPPY"**

I am currently employed by the Santa Ana Police Department, and assigned as a Detective to the Vice/Narcotics Unit. As of April 7th, 2021, I was assigned as a Narcotic Detection Canine Handler. "Poppy" who is a 5 year old female Black Labrador Retriever, was acquired by the Santa Ana Police Department on April 7th, 2021. Subsequently, I was assigned as POPPY'S full-time canine handler on this day.

POPPY and I have received training as a Narcotic Detection Canine Team by "Scenturion Canine Consulting LLC," which is located in Fontana, California. Poppy and I completed 4 weeks of formal Narcotic Detection Training taught by "Scenturion Canine Consulting LLC" from April 12, 2021 through May 6th, 2021. During that time, POPPY has been trained to detect and alert to the odors of Marijuana, Methamphetamine, Cocaine, Heroin, MDMA (Ecstasy) and their derivative. POPPY has been trained to show a "passive alert" in response to detecting any of these narcotic odors. Prior to her final alert POPPY will often make sudden change of direction towards the source of the odor, her breathing pattern will change and she may take several deep inhalations through his nose, and then appear to stop taking breaths. Also, without direction, POPPY may also jump up into and/or crawl under obstacles to get closer to the source of the odor(s). This passive alert may also indicate item(s) that may have recently been contaminated with the odor of one or more of the aforementioned narcotics for which POPPY has been trained to detect.

Also, while training at "Scenturion Canine Consulting LLC," POPPY and I completed over 400 narcotic related and "blank" sniffs. These sniffs consisted of commercial buildings, residential homes, vehicles, transport trucks, packages/parcels, luggage, and many other different types of structures and objects. During these training sessions, the "training aids" were concealed in various locations, inside and/or outside, and POPPY was used to detect and locate them. POPPY and I, have also conducted sniffs where there were no narcotics present (blanks), and POPPY did not adversely alert to these locations that were deemed blank.


On May 6th, 2021, POPPY and I passed the initial California POST certification process through "CNCA," which was conducted by a recognized CNCA Certified K9 trainer/instructor, to detect the odors of Marijuana, Methamphetamine, Cocaine, Heroin, MDMA (Ecstasy) and their derivative. It was on this day, POPPY and I became a CA POST Certified Narcotics Detection Team. On January 14, 2022, December 22, 2022 and November 7, 2023, POPPY and I re-certified as a CA POST Certified Narcotics Detection Team through "CNCA". I am also a current member of the California Narcotics Officers Association (CNOA).

During the week of June 6, 2023, Poppy was trained to detect and alert to the odor of Fentanyl and its derivatives. On June 9, 2023, Poppy and I passed the California POST certification process through "CNCA," which was conducted by a recognized CNCA Certified K9 trainer/instructor, to detect the odor of Fentanyl and its derivatives.

On September 18, 2024, my police canine and I assisted with a narcotic parcel investigation. Canine Poppy alerted to the presence of the odor of illegal narcotics emitting from the following parcel.

USPS Parcel: 9505 5128 5923 4256 3978 46

Addressed To: Peter D
6501 MATSON DR
the Colony, Tx 75056



Detective Corporal G. Gutierrez #3252
Santa Ana PD